

General Assembly

January Session, 2025

Amendment

LCO No. 9200



Offered by: REP. GILCHREST, 18th Dist.

To: Subst. House Bill No. 6932

File No. 912

Cal. No. 290

"AN ACT CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A STATE INTERPRETING STANDARDS BOARD."

1 Strike everything after the enacting clause and substitute the 2 following in lieu thereof:

"Section 1. (NEW) (Effective July 1, 2025) (a) There is established an 3 4 Interpreting Standards Board. The board shall be comprised of nine 5 members, who shall be appointed not later than October 1, 2025, by the 6 Commissioner of Aging and Disability Services, in consultation with the 7 director of the Bureau of Services for Persons Who are Deaf, Deafblind 8 or Hard of Hearing, in accordance with subsection (b) of this section. 9 Said board shall be located within the bureau at the Department of 10 Aging and Disability Services. The board shall:

(1) Establish (A) education, training and certification requirements
for interpreters working in special settings, including community,
educational, legal and medical settings, and (B) training needed to
provide interpreting services to select populations, including protactile
language and tactile language interpreting training to provide such

services to deafblind persons and training in interpreting methods toserve non-English speaking persons;

(2) Establish operational standards for organizations and providers
supplying interpreting services in these settings and to select
populations, including, but not limited to, deafblind persons;

(3) Expand, in consultation with the bureau director, interpreter
access to educational, training, internship, apprenticeship, mentorship
and credentialing opportunities and promote access to such
opportunities to grow the pool of interpreters in the state;

25 (4) Investigate complaints concerning noncompliance with state 26 interpreting standards, and, (A) if the board determines an interpreter 27 has violated the interpreter code of professional conduct of a national or 28 state professional interpreter certifying body, file a report with such 29 body, (B) for substantiated complaints involving interpreters for 30 deafblind persons, file a report with the American Association for the 31 DeafBlind, and (C) file a report on all such substantiated complaints 32 with the protection and advocacy organization for persons with 33 disabilities in the state designated pursuant to section 46a-10b of the 34 general statutes; and

(5) Not later than January 1, 2027, make recommendations to the
Commissioner of Aging and Disability Services on new interpreter
standards, regulations and legislation concerning qualifications of
interpreters for persons who are deaf, deafblind or hard of hearing.

39 (b) The Commissioner of Aging and Disability Services, in 40 consultation with the director of the Bureau of Services for Persons Who 41 are Deaf, Deafblind or Hard of Hearing, shall appoint the membership 42 of the board, in accordance with the provisions of this subsection. All 43 members of the board appointed pursuant to this subsection shall have 44 expressed a willingness to serve on the board and not less than six 45 appointments to the board shall be reflective of the geographic and 46 racial diversity of the state. The board shall consist of the following

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47	members:		
48	(1) The president of the Connecticut Association of the Deaf, or the		
49	president's designee;		
50	(2) The president of the Connecticut Registry of Interpreters for the		
51	Deaf, or the president's designee;		
52	(3) The president of the DeafBlind Association of Connecticut, or the		
53	president's designee;		
54	(4) Two interpreter professionals, including one member		
55	representing deaf interpreter professionals and one member		
56	representing hearing interpreter professionals, each with training		
57	appropriate for providing services in a special setting different from the		
58	other, including community, educational, legal and medical settings;		
59	and		
60	(5) Four consumers of interpreting services, one each representing		
61	consumers who are hearing, deaf, deafblind and hard of hearing.		
62	(c) Interpreter professionals and consumers appointed to the board		
63	shall, for not less than three years, (1) have been residents of the state,		
64	and (2) have experience providing or using interpreting services,		
65	interacting with persons who are deaf, deafblind or hard of hearing and		
66	familiarity with interpreting issues and professional standards for		
67	interpreting. Priority in interpreter professional appointments shall be		
68	given to those who, for not less than three years, have been certified or		
69	registered interpreters involved in the delivery of interpreting services		
70	for deaf, deafblind or hard of hearing persons.		
71	(d) The Commissioner of Aging and Disability Services shall stagger		
72	the terms of board members appointed pursuant to subdivisions (4) and		
73	(5) of subsection (b) of this section. The commissioner shall initially		
74	appoint two interpreter professionals and two consumer board		
75	members for a term of three years and the other two consumer board		
76	members for a term of two years. Following the initial terms, the		

commissioner shall appoint board members appointed pursuant to
subdivisions (4) and (5) of subsection (b) of this section for terms of two
years on a staggered basis.

(e) Board members shall elect a chairperson and such other officers
as the board deems advisable at the first meeting of the board, which
shall be held not later than November 1, 2025. The board shall meet at
least quarterly.

84 (f) Interpreters and applicants for an interpreter registration card 85 holding different certificates or credentials from recognized national 86 and state interpreter credentialing organizations may apply to the 87 Interpreting Standards Board for review of whether an approved 88 acceptable credential equivalent or substitute, or a waiver from 89 complying with state interpreting standards starting on the date that 90 such waiver may be granted, for a period of time not to exceed three 91 years, as determined by the board. Upon review of the application for a 92 equivalent, the Interpreting Standards Board may credential 93 recommend such substitute credential or waiver to the Commissioner 94 of Aging and Disability Services along with a determination as to within 95 which settings the applicant is qualified to work.

96 Sec. 2. Section 17a-838 of the general statutes is repealed and the 97 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1*, 2025):

98 (a) For the purposes of this section:

99 (1) "Community setting" means any setting, other than those
100 specifically identified as educational, legal or medical, including, but
101 not limited to, any setting involving everyday life activities such as
102 information sharing, employment, social services, entertainment and
103 civic and community engagements;

104 (2) "Bureau" means the Bureau of Services for Persons Who are Deaf,
 105 Deafblind or Hard of Hearing;

106 [(2)] (3) "Department" means the Department of Aging and Disability

107 Services;

108 [(3)] (4) "Interpreting" means the translating or transliterating of 109 English concepts to a language concept used by a person who is deaf, 110 deafblind or hard of hearing or the translating of a deaf, deafblind or 111 hard of hearing person's language to English concepts through the use 112 of American Sign Language, protactile language and tactile language for 113 persons who are deafblind, English-based sign language, non-English-114 based language for non-English speaking persons, cued speech [,] and 115 oral transliterating; [and information received tactually;]

[(4)] (5) "Deafblind" means combined vision and hearing
[impairments] loss that challenge a person's ability to communicate,
interact with others, access information and move about safely;

119 [(5)] (6) "Educational setting" means any setting where interpretive 120 services are provided concerning education-related matters, including, 121 but not limited to, all schools, school-based programs, services and 122 activities and other educational programs;

[(6)] (7) "Legal setting" means any criminal or civil action involving a court of competent jurisdiction, any investigation or action conducted by a duly authorized law enforcement agency, employment-related hearings, appointments and situations requiring the presence of an attorney;

[(7)] (8) "Medical setting" means gatherings or gathering places where physical health, mental health, or both are addressed, including, but not limited to, hospitals, clinics, assisted living and rehabilitation facilities, mental health treatment sessions, psychological evaluations, substance abuse treatment sessions, crisis intervention and appointments or other treatment requiring the presence of a doctor, nurse, medical staff or other health care professional; and

135 [(8)] (9) "Transliterating" means converting or rendering English 136 concepts to a language concept used by a person who is deaf, deafblind 137 or hard of hearing or the translating of a deaf, deafblind or hard of

138 hearing person's language concept to English concepts.

139 (b) Except as provided in subsections (g) and (h) of this section, all 140 persons providing interpreting services shall register, annually, with the 141 Bureau of Services for Persons Who are Deaf, Deafblind or Hard of 142 <u>Hearing within the</u> Department of Aging and Disability Services. Such 143 registration shall be on a form prescribed or furnished by the 144 [Commissioner of Aging and Disability Services] bureau and shall 145 include the registrant's name, residential or business address, or both, 146 contact information, including, but not limited to, phone number, place 147 of employment as interpreter and interpreter certification or credentials. 148 The [department] bureau shall (1) issue interpreter identification cards 149 for those who register in accordance with this section, and (2) maintain 150 a current listing on [its] the Internet web site of the Department of Aging 151 and Disability Services of such registered interpreters, categorized by 152 interpreter settings for which they are qualified [. The department] and 153 by specialized skills such as protactile language or tactile language 154 interpreting for deafblind persons and interpreting for non-English 155 speaking persons. The bureau, in consultation with the Interpreting 156 Standards Board established pursuant to section 1 of this act, may also 157 require documentation of the registrant's training hours. The 158 [department] bureau shall annually issue interpreter identification 159 cards listing the type of settings in which the registrant is qualified to 160 interpret. The department shall establish an Internet web page 161 containing information about services for deaf, deafblind and hard of 162 hearing individuals. The department's Internet web page shall include, 163 but not be limited to, information related to such services provided by 164 the department and the Departments of Social Services, Mental Health 165 and Addiction Services and Children and Families.

(c) Except as provided in subsections (g) and (h) of this section, no
 person shall provide interpreting services in the state, including in a
 community setting, unless such person is registered with the <u>Bureau of</u>
 <u>Services for Persons Who are Deaf, Deafblind or Hard of Hearing within</u>
 <u>the</u> Department of Aging and Disability Services according to the

provisions of this section, holds recognized national or state interpreter
credentials determined by the [department] <u>Interpreting Standards</u>
<u>Board, established pursuant to section 1 of this act,</u> to be acceptable for
interpreting purposes where appropriate in [Connecticut] <u>the state</u> and,
<u>until new interpreter standards are adopted pursuant to subsection (k)</u>
<u>of this section</u>, has met at least one of the following qualifications <u>and</u>
the provisions of subsections (d) and (e) of this section:

178 (1) (A) Has passed the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf 179 written generalist test or the National Association of the Deaf-National 180 Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf certification knowledge 181 examination, (B) holds a level three certification provided by the 182 National Association of the Deaf, and (C) (i) documents the achievement 183 of two continuing education units per year for a maximum of five years 184 of training approved by the Commissioner of Aging and Disability 185 Services, and (ii) on or before the fifth anniversary of having passed the 186 National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf written generalist test or 187 the National Association of the Deaf-National Registry of Interpreters 188 for the Deaf certification knowledge examination, has passed the 189 National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf performance examination 190 or the National Association of the Deaf-National Registry of Interpreters 191 for the Deaf national interpreter certification examination;

192 (2) (A) Has passed the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf 193 written generalist test or the National Association of the Deaf-National 194 Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf certification knowledge 195 examination, (B) is a graduate of an accredited interpreter training 196 program and documents the achievement of two continuing education 197 units per year for a maximum of five years of training approved by the 198 commissioner, and (C) on or before the fifth anniversary of having 199 passed the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf written 200 generalist test or the National Association of the Deaf-National Registry 201 of Interpreters for the Deaf certification knowledge examination, has 202 passed the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf performance 203 examination or the National Association of the Deaf-National Registry

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204 205	of Interpreters for the Deaf national interpreter certification examination;		
206	(3) Holds a level four or higher certification from the National		
207	Association of the Deaf;		
208	(4) Holds certification by the National Registry of Interpreters for the		
209	Deaf;		
210	(5) For situations requiring an oral interpreter only, holds oral		
211	certification from the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf;		
212	(6) For situations requiring a cued speech transliterator only, holds		
213	certification from the National Training, Evaluation and Certification		
214	4 Unit and has passed the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deat		
215	written generalist test;		
216	(7) Holds a reverse skills certificate or is a certified deaf interpreter		
217	under the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf;		
218	(8) Holds a National Association of the Deaf-National Registry of		
219	Interpreters for the Deaf national interpreting certificate; or		
220	(9) Holds the credential of Approved Deaf Interpreter, Approved		
221	American Sign Language-English Interpreter, or Approved Sign		
222	Language Transliterator by the Massachusetts Commission on the Deaf		
223	and Hard of Hearing.		
224	(d) No person shall provide interpreting services in a medical setting		
225	unless such person is registered with the Bureau of Services for Persons		
226	Who are Deaf, Deafblind or Hard of Hearing within the Department of		
227	Aging and Disability Services according to the provisions of this section		
228	and holds (1) a comprehensive skills certificate from the National		
229	Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, (2) a certificate of interpretation or		
230	a certificate of transliteration from the National Registry of Interpreters		
231	for the Deaf, (3) a level four or higher certification from the National		
232	Association of the Deaf, (4) a reverse skills certificate or certification as		

233 a deaf interpreter under the National Registry of Interpreters for the 234 Deaf, (5) for situations requiring an oral interpreter only, an oral 235 certification from the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, (6)236 for situations requiring a cued speech transliterator only, a certification 237 from the National Training, Evaluation and Certification Unit and has 238 passed the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf written 239 generalist test, (7) a National Association of the Deaf-National Registry 240 of Interpreters for the Deaf national interpreting certificate, or (8) the 241 credential of Approved Deaf Interpreter by the Massachusetts 242 Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

243 (e) No person shall provide interpreting services in a legal setting 244 unless such person is registered with the Bureau of Services for Persons 245 Who are Deaf, Deafblind or Hard of Hearing within the Department of 246 Aging and Disability Services according to the provisions of this section 247 and holds (1) a comprehensive skills certificate from the National 248 Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, (2) a certificate of interpretation 249 and a certificate of transliteration from the National Registry of 250 Interpreters for the Deaf, (3) a level five certification from the National 251 Association of the Deaf, (4) a reverse skills certificate or is a certified deaf 252 interpreter under the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, (5) 253 for situations requiring an oral interpreter only, an oral certification 254 from the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, (6) for situations 255 requiring a cued speech transliterator only, certification from the 256 National Training, Evaluation and Certification Unit and has passed the 257 National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf written generalist test, (7) 258 a National Association of the Deaf-National Registry of Interpreters for 259 the Deaf national interpreting certificate, or (8) the credential of 260 Approved Deaf Interpreter by the Massachusetts Commission on the 261 Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

(f) No person who is not registered as a qualified interpreter pursuantto this section shall:

(1) Engage in the practice of or offer to engage in the practice ofinterpreting for another person, an agency or an entity;

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266 267	(2) Use the title "interpreter", "transliterator" or a similar title in connection with services provided under his or her name;
268 269	(3) Present or identify himself or herself as an interpreter qualified to engage in interpreting in this state;
270 271	(4) Use the title "interpreter", "transliterator" or a similar title in advertisements or communications; or
272 273	(5) Perform the function of or convey the impression that he or she is an interpreter or transliterator.
274 275 276 277 278 279 280	(g) The requirements of this section shall apply to persons who (1) receive compensation for the provision of interpreting services, and (2) provide interpreting services as part of their job duties. The requirements of this section shall not apply to nonregistered individuals such as family members and friends who voluntarily provide interpreting services at the request of a deaf, deafblind or hard of hearing person.
281 282	(h) The following individuals shall be exempt from the registration requirements of this section:
283 284 285	(1) An individual interpreting at (A) a worship service conducted by a religious entity, or (B) services for educational purposes conducted by a religious entity or religiously affiliated school;
286 287 288 289 290 291 292 293	(2) An individual engaged in interpreting during an emergency situation, when obtaining a registered interpreter or registered transliterator could cause a delay that may lead to injury or loss to the individual requiring the interpreting services, provided such emergency assistance does not waive any communication access requirements for any entity pursuant to the federal Americans with Disabilities Act or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as both may be amended from time to time;
294	(3) An individual engaged in interpreting as part of a supervised

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internship or practicum in an interpreting program at an accredited
college or university or an interpreting mentorship program approved
by the department if (A) such interpreting is not in a legal, medical or
educational setting, or (B) the individual is accompanied by an
interpreter registered pursuant to this section; [or]

300 (4) An interpreter who is certified by a recognized national 301 professional certifying body such as the National Registry of 302 Interpreters for the Deaf or the National Association of the Deaf or a 303 recognized state professional certifying body from outside the state and 304 provides interpreting services in the state for a period of time not 305 exceeding fourteen days during a calendar year;

306 (5) An interpreter who has received an acceptable credential
 307 equivalent or a waiver from the requirements of this section from the
 308 Commissioner of Aging and Disability Services in accordance with the
 309 recommendations of the Interpreting Standards Board pursuant to
 310 section 1 of this act; or

(6) An interpreter who is interpreting for an individual who is
 deafblind, until new standards are adopted for such interpreting
 pursuant to subsection (k) of this section or a state or national standard
 is established for protactile language or tactile language interpreting.

(i) Deaf, deafblind and hard of hearing persons may exercise their
right to request or use a different registered interpreter than the
interpreter provided to interpret for such persons in any interpreting
setting in accordance with a nationally recognized interpreter code of
professional conduct.

(j) Any person who is not registered in accordance with this section
who represents himself or herself as an interpreter registered with the
<u>Bureau of Services for Persons Who are Deaf, Deafblind or Hard of</u>
<u>Hearing within the</u> Department of Aging and Disability Services, or
who engages in wilful or fraudulent misrepresentation of his or her
credentials in an attempt to register with the [department] <u>bureau</u>, shall

sHB 6932 Amendment 326 be guilty of a class C misdemeanor. Failure to renew such registration 327 in a timely manner shall not in and of itself constitute a violation for the 328 purposes of this subsection. For purposes of this subsection, "timely 329 manner" means registration renewal not more than thirty days after 330 such registration has expired. 331 (k) Not later than March 1, 2027, the Commissioner of Aging and 332 Disability Services shall implement policies and procedures in advance 333 of adopting regulations pursuant to chapter 54 that incorporate new interpreter standards based on the recommendations of the Interpreting 334 335 Standards Board pursuant to section 1 of this act. The commissioner 336 shall post (1) notice of intent to adopt the regulations on the 337 eRegulations System not later than twenty days after the date of implementation of the policies and procedures, and (2) a prominent link 338 339 to the policies and procedures on the Internet web site of the 340 Department of Aging and Disability Services. Policies and procedures 341 implemented pursuant to this subsection shall be valid until the time 342 final regulations are adopted. The commissioner shall submit such 343 policies and procedures in proposed regulation form to the legislative 344 regulation review committee not later than twelve months following the date of publication of the notice of intent to adopt regulations as 345 346 provided for in this subsection. 347 Sec. 3. Subsection (c) of section 17a-835a of the general statutes is 348 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective October 349 1, 2025): 350 (c) The director shall report to the commissioner. The director's duties shall include, but need not be limited to: 351 352 (1) Assisting in overseeing department employees who provide 353 counseling, interpreting and other assistance to persons who are deaf, 354 deafblind or hard of hearing, except for federally funded vocational 355 rehabilitation employees;

356 (2) Annually updating and publishing on the department's Internet

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360 (3) [Assisting in the registration] Registration of state-registered 361 interpreters, including maintaining and publishing on the Internet web 362 page of the bureau and the department's Internet web site a list of such 363 interpreters categorized by the settings in which they are qualified to 364 interpret and by specialized skills such as protactile language or tactile 365 language interpreting for deafblind persons and non-English 366 interpreting for non-English speaking persons, in accordance with 367 section 17a-838, as amended by this act;

(4) Assisting each state agency, as defined in section 1-79, in
appointing an employee of each such agency to serve as a point of
contact for concerns related to persons who are deaf, deafblind or hard
of hearing, pursuant to section 4-61pp, and coordinating efforts to
resolve such concerns with such employees serving as a point of contact;

(5) Coordinating efforts of the Department of Aging and Disability
Services to provide information and referral services to deaf, deafblind
or hard of hearing persons on resources available to such persons;

376 (6) Establishing a separate Internet web page on the department's 377 Internet web site for the bureau and including on such web page (A) the 378 meeting schedule, agendas, minutes and other resources of the 379 Advisory Board for Persons Who are Deaf, Deafblind or Hard of 380 Hearing established pursuant to section 17a-836, as amended by this act, 381 (B) an instructional video with audio and captions on the home page on 382 how persons who are deaf, deafblind or hard of hearing can navigate 383 the web page, resources and tools, and (C) other material pursuant to 384 this section;

385 (7) Coordinating responses to consumer concerns, requests for386 assistance and referrals to resources, including from state agencies;

387 (8) Coordinating education and training initiatives, including, but not

limited to, working with (A) local and state public safety and public health officials and first responders on best practices for serving and communicating with deaf, deafblind or hard of hearing persons, and (B) sign language interpreters, oral interpreters and interpreters who are trained to interpret for deaf, deafblind or hard of hearing persons to maintain or enhance the skills of such interpreters in a variety of settings;

(9) Collaborating with interpreting services providers and training
organizations to increase opportunities for mentorships, internships,
apprenticeships and specialized training in interpreting services for
deaf, deafblind or hard of hearing persons;

(10) Partnering with civic and community organizations serving deaf,
deafblind or hard of hearing persons on workshops and information
sessions regarding new laws, regulations or developments regarding
services, programs or health care needs of such persons;

403 (11) Raising public awareness of programs and services available to404 deaf, deafblind or hard of hearing persons;

(12) Assisting the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority in
implementing telecommunication relay service programs for deaf,
deafblind or hard of hearing persons. In awarding any contract for such
relay service programs, the authority shall consult with the
Commissioner of Aging and Disability Services and the director of the
bureau;

(13) Working with the Governor and Connecticut television stationson ways to make television broadcasts more accessible to persons whoare deaf, deafblind or hard of hearing; and

(14) In consultation with the Advisory Board for Persons Who are
Deaf, Deafblind or Hard of Hearing established pursuant to section 17a836, as amended by this act, identifying the needs of deaf, deafblind or
hard of hearing persons and addressing policy changes that may be
necessary to better serve such persons.

419 Sec. 4. Section 17a-836 of the general statutes is repealed and the 420 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

The Advisory Board for Persons Who are Deaf, Deafblind or Hard of Hearing is hereby created to advocate, strengthen and advise the Governor and the General Assembly concerning state policies affecting persons who are deaf, deafblind or hard of hearing and their relationship to the public, industry, health care and educational opportunity. The board shall:

427 (1) Monitor services for persons who are deaf, deafblind or hard of428 hearing;

429 (2) Establish an annual leadership roundtable meeting with the Board 430 of Regents for Higher Education, the Commissioners of Aging and 431 Disability Services, Public Health, Social Services, Mental Health and 432 Addiction Services, Education, Developmental Services, Children and 433 Families, Early Childhood, Economic and Community Development, 434 Emergency Services and Public Protection, Correction, Housing and 435 Higher Education and the Labor Commissioner, or their designees, to 436 discuss best practices to serve persons who are deaf, deafblind or hard 437 of hearing, identify gaps in such services and make recommendations 438 to rectify such gaps;

(3) Refer persons with complaints concerning the qualification and
registration of interpreters for persons who are deaf, deafblind or hard
of hearing to the entity designated pursuant to section 46a-10b <u>and the</u>
<u>Interpreting Standards Board established pursuant to section 1 of this</u>
<u>act;</u>

(4) Make recommendations for (A) technical assistance and resources
for state agencies in order to serve persons who are deaf, deafblind or
hard of hearing; (B) public policy and legislative changes needed to
address gaps in services, including interpreting services for persons
who are non-English speaking; and (C) the qualifications and
registration of interpreters pursuant to section 17a-838, as amended by

450	this act. The advisory board shall submit a report on such		
451	recommendations and the activities of the Bureau of Services for		
452	Persons Who are Deaf, Deafblind or Hard of Hearing, [in the previous		
453	calendar year,] in accordance with section 11-4a, not later than [January]		
454	September 1, 2025, and annually thereafter, to the Governor and the		
455	joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance		
456	of matters relating to appropriations, aging, commerce, education,		
457	higher education, housing, human services, the judiciary, labor, public		
458	health and public safety."		

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:					
Section 1	July 1, 2025	New section			
Sec. 2	October 1, 2025	17a-838			
Sec. 3	October 1, 2025	17a-835a(c)			
Sec. 4	July 1, 2025	17a-836			